

A Study on the Role of Indian Library Associations in the Scholarly Communication through Websites

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Abstract :

The main focus of this paper is to study the contribution and influence of library associations' scholarly communication through their respective websites. Scholarly publication plays a significant role in promotion, scholarly recognition, development, certification at different associations as well as institutions. This study presents how the library associations' publications give support to scholarly communication. The study analyses the websites of the associations thoroughly to reveal the role of the publications to enrich scholarly communication in the field of Library and Information Science. It also gives stress to having own and well-maintained websites incorporating open access full-text scholarly resources for enriching scholarly communication. Thus this study has created a value addition in the role of library associations.

Keywords :

Library Associations, LIS Professionals, Publications, Scholarly Communication, Webinars, Websites

1. Introduction :

Library professionals felt the urge to be united to accomplish their goals. As a result, India got her first library association in 1914 officially in the name of Andhra Desa Library Association. The library associations are mainly formed to improve library services, to expand professional knowledge, to provide leadership quality among the library professionals, to promote fellow feeling, to safeguard their rights, to organise educational programmes and many others. To initiate the scholarly study, the library associations started printing and publishing books and journals also. In this way, they have tried to improve Library and Information Science (LIS)



profession and professionals as well. So, gradually library associations started to play a vital role in scholarly communication for enriching the philosophy of LIS. To share one's findings with others, the process which started to gain popularity is called scholarly communication. This term emerged from the publication of the first journal in 1665 and became popular in the 1970s. (Das, Anup Kumar, 2015). Thus library associations through their various publications started participating in scholarly communication in the post-independence period. With the passage of time when websites have already become famous for their usefulness and the open access movement is gaining momentum, the library associations are improving their websites incorporating scholarly resources to augment the function of library associations in scholarly communication.

2. Review of related literature :

Many studies are done for assessing the developing attitude of the library associations in India and how they are gradually playing various academic as well as professional roles through their respective websites. Biswas and Das Biswas (2014) had re-evaluated the function of library associations in the pre-independence and post-independence eras. Ghosh (2004) had revealed an emerging role of the library associations in Indian library development in an ever-changing information scenario. Karisiddappa (2002) discussed the role and importance of state and national level associations in library development in India. Pradhan had revealed the objectives and function of the Indian Library Association (ILA) and the Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Science (IASLIC) in 2018. Satpathi and Ghosh (2012) had depicted the role of IASLIC in developing computer skills among LIS professionals in India. Eventually, library associations started to show their impact on Library and Information Science education. This is presented by Basu and Dutta (2017). Similar research was done by Vinayagamorthy and Kumari in 2015 when they discussed the importance of library associations to promote education, research and training. Now the library associations are developing their websites for communication. In 2015 Chandra presented the role and impact over the web of the library associations. Another research to analyse the contents and interactivity of the national websites around the world was done by Haneefa and Jiji in 2019. Library associations have been participating in scholarly communications through their various publications from the beginning but the overall picture of scholarly communica-



tion has been changed for the use of WWW. Mukherjee had beautifully shown the journey of scholarly communication from print to the web in 2009. The perspective of the study can be understood from the related literature review.

3. Need of the study :

Many kinds of research have been done to explore the function of Indian library associations and their pivotal role in LIS education. Studies have also been done to establish the relationship between publications and scholarly communication. Some papers are presented to show the impact of the web on the communication process of library associations. But this study is extremely concerned to reviews the role of Indian library associations' publications in scholarly communication through their respective websites.

4. Objectives :

The objectives of the study are as follows

1. To identify the role of Indian library associations in scholarly communication
2. To find out the impact of associations' websites in scholarly communication
3. To examine how much library association are effective in scholarly communication by incorporating scholarly resources in the websites.

5. Methodology :

The related literature of different interpretations of LIS professionals was studied in detail for this study. Several useful links were surveyed for the same from November, 2020 to March, 2021. And finally, 27 Indian library associations' websites were found socially active whose web contents have been analysed to find out the role of library associations in scholarly communication.

6. Analysis of data :

There are many state and national level library associations in India. Only the library associations having their websites are listed below with their acronym, year of establishment, place and domain name.

**Table 1: State level library associations**

Sl. No.	State Level Associations	Acro- nym	Year	Place	Domain
1	Andhra Pradesh library Association	APLA	1914	Andhra pradesh	apla.co.in
2	Bengal Library Association	BLA	1925	West Bengal	blacal.org
3	Madras Library Association	MALA	1928	Madras	madraslibraryassociation.com
4	Karnataka State Library Association	KALA	1929	Karnataka	kalaonline.com
5	Punjab Library Association	PLA	1929	Punjab	punjabla.org
6	Assam Library Association	ALA	1938	Assam	ala.net.in
7	Kerala Library Association	KLA	1945	Kerala	keralalibraryassociation.org
8	Delhi Library Association	DLA	1953	Delhi	dlaindia.in
9	Gujrat Library Association	GLA	1953	Gujrat	glavvn.wordpress.com
10	Madhya Pradesh Library Association	MPLA	1957	Madhya Pradesh	mpla.org
11	Haryana Library Association	HLA	1966	Haryana	haryanalibraryassociation.in
12	Assam College Librarians Association	ACLA	1973	Assam	acla.co.in
13	Bombay Science Librarians Association	BOSLA	1975	Mumbai	bosla2013.wixsite.com
14	Himachal Pradesh Library Association	HPLAS	2006	Himachal Pradesh	hplas.org
15	Jharkhand Information and Library Association	JILA	2007	Jharkhand	jila.org.in
16	Academic Library Association of Goa	ALAG		Goa	alaggoa.weebly.com
17	West Bengal College Librarians Association	WBCLA	1979-80	West Bengal	wbcla.org.in
18	Maharashtra University and College Librarians Association	MUCLA	2013	Jalgaon	mucla.in
19	Rajasthan Technical Library Association	RTLA	2010	Rajasthan	rtlaindia.org

Table 1 presents the list of 19 state level associations which have contributed a lot in scholarly publications through their websites.

Table 2 : National level library associations

Sl. no.	National Level Associations	Acronym	Year	Place	Domain
1	Indian Library Association	ILA	1933	New Delhi	ilaindia.net
2	Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres	IASLIC	1955	West Bengal	iaslic1955.org.in
3	Indian Association of Teachers of Library and Information Science	IATLIS	1969		iatlis.org
4	Association of Agricultural Librarians Documentalist of India	AALDI	1971		aaldi.in
5	Society for Information Science	SIS	1976		sis.org.in
6	Society for Advancement of Library and Information Science	SALIS	2002	Tamilnadu	salis.in
7	Central Government Library Association	CGLA	2004	Uttarakhand	cgl.org.in
8	Indian School Library Association	ISLA	2018	Delhi	isla.org.in

Table 2 presents the list of 8 National level associations which have their official websites for participating in scholarly communications through various publications.

Publication

The publications which are available through websites only are provided

Table 3 : Newsletter

Sl. NO	Association (Fr, Accessibility : Off / On / Off & On)	Content
1.	MPLA (Q, On)	About association, consortium, webinars and certificate programmes and miscellaneous
2.	PLA (Q, Off & On)	Archive of newsletter not functioning and miscellaneous.



3.	MALA (Q, On)	About association, jobs, events, articles on library and information science and allied areas, library management and miscellaneous
4.	KLA (Q, On)	About association, lectures by renowned person, message from senior LIS professionals, programmes related to development of library and miscellaneous.
5.	GLA (Q, Off & On)	About association, conference/seminars /symposium in library and information science, useful information about LIS profession and technology, news on the upcoming events and miscellaneous.
6.	BOSLA (Bi-an, On)	About association, annual lecture series on LIS and allied areas, past and upcoming events, report on various workshop, achievements, open source initiatives, various library orientation program, digital library project, about latest development and miscellaneous.
7.	WBCLA (Q, On)	About association, activities and achievements and miscellaneous.
8.	ILA (Mon, On)	About association, past event and forthcoming events, about publications, and research works and miscellaneous.
9.	IASLIA (Mon, On & Off)	IASLIC activities, news on national and international conference/seminar/workshops, miscellaneous news, technology news, special lectures on various topics, different awards and miscellaneous.
10.	CGLA (Q, On)	About association, library related published news, professional achievements, recruitments & vacancies, report on many topics, forthcoming events, and article on LIS and miscellaneous.
11.	SIS (Q, On)	About association, activities, reports, notices on several issues, news on forthcoming events and miscellaneous.
12.	SLA (Q, On)	About association, article on several topics, reports and miscellaneous.

(An= Annual, Bi-an = Bi-annual, Fr = Frequency, Mon = Monthly, Off = Offline, On = Online, Q = Quarterly)

Table 3 provides the list of 12 state and national level associations that have been publishing newsletters from the beginning. The information stated above is only collected from the websites. All the newsletters are published in regular intervals such as monthly, quarterly, bi-annual, annually. They are available offline, online, or in both formats. According to table 3, all the newsletters are available online. The newsletter presents the whole strategy of the respective associations and functions as an important mouthpiece of different activities of associations.

Table 4: Conference proceedings

Sl. No.	Association	No. (P./E.)	Theme of Conference Proceeding
1.	BLA	03 (P.-O.T)	Application of KOHA in libraries
2.	PLA	03 (P.-O.T)	1) Ranganathan's activities, 2) Public library, 3) academic library
3.	JILA	03 (E.-F.T.)	1) Emerging trends in libraries & information services (2014), 2) Re-engineering public library and academic library system in India (2015). 3) Library and information management in digital environment (2017).
4.	ILA	31 (P.-O.T)	1) Changing scenario of Library and Librarianship in the Digital era, 2) Technological challenges of the digital age, 3) Managing libraries in the changing information world, 4) Future of public libraries, 5) National information policy, 6) Library movement, 7) User study.
5.	IASLIC	--	63 conference and seminar organized by IASLIC on the theme: LIS education and profession and allied areas.
6.	IATLIS	06 (P.-O.T)	1) Changing face of LIS education, research and training in the present era.
7.	CGLA	05 (E.-F.T.)	1) Role of Government and Public Libraries in the Digital Era, 2) management of e-resources, 3) Future role library and information profession

(E.= E-Copy, F.T.= Full-text, O.T. Only Title, P.= Print)



Table 4 shows the details of published (print/e-copy) conference proceedings available from websites. It is interesting to note that Jharkhand Information and Library Association (JILA) and CGLA have updated full-text e-copy of conference proceedings on emerging trends in LIS and the role of government libraries respectively. Whereas IASLIC have organized 63 conferences and seminar so far but it is not clear from the website how many conference proceedings the association have published so far.

Table 5: Periodical

Sl. No.	Association	Title of Journal (ISSN No.)	P-R	UGC Care listed	Fr.	Accessibility	
						Full - text	Abs-tract (only)
1	KLA	KLA Journal of Information Science and Technology (KJIST)(-)	Y	N	H-Y	Y	N
2	MALA	International Journal of MALA (IJMALA) (-)	-	-	-	-	-
3	DLA	Library Herald (0024-2292)	Y	Y	Q	Y	N
4	WBCLA	College Libraries (0972-1975)	Y	Y	Q	Y	N
5	ILA	Journal of Indian Library Association (JILA) (Print:2277-5145)(Online:2456-513X)	Y	Y	Q	Y	N
6	IASLIC	IASLIC Bulletin (0018-8441)	Y	Y	Q	N	Y
7	AALDI	Indian Journal of Agricultural Library and Information Services (IJALIS)(0974-8776)	Y	N	H-Y	Y	N
8	IATLIS	IATLIS Journal of Library Education and Research	-	-	Q	-	-

(H-Y = Half-Yearly, Q.=Quarterly, N=No, Y=Yes, “ - ”= Information not found)

It is found from table 5 that eight associations have mentioned journal publications. But except the very mention of the title of journals no other information regarding the journals is found from the respective website of MALA and IATLIS. Journals of KLA, DLA, WBCLA, ILA, and AALDI are providing full-text access to journal articles whereas IASLIC Bulletin is providing the abstract of the articles. All the articles are evaluated by the qualified LIS profession to maintain the quality of research integrity in the field of LIS. Thus the process enriches the scholarly communication as well as knowledge domain in the field of LIS.



Table 6: Contents of periodical

Sl. No.	Journal	Content
1.	Library Herald	1) Review of doctoral theses, dissertation & research report, 2) Classification, 3) Biography, 4) ICT & e-resource, 5) Metadata, 6) Information seeking behaviour, 9) Preservation and Conservation policy, 10) Library management, 11) Obituary and homage, 12) Book review, 13) News of publications.
2.	College Libraries	1) Application of ICT, social media and library services, 2) Management of academic and other library services, 3) Role of LIS professional in the Digital era, 4) Bibliometrics, scientometrics and infometrics, 4) Information need and seeking behaviour.
3	IASLIC Bulletin	1) Document processing and collection development, 2) Library management and marketing, 3) ICT, social media and role LIS professional, 4) Bibliometrics, scientometrics and infometrics, 5) Information need and seeking behaviour, 6) Preservation and conservation, 7) Open access, 8) Community information services, 9) LIS education.
4.	IJALIC	1) ICT- its use and application, 2) Agricultural library, 3) User study, 4) Trends of online open course, 5) Knowledge management.
5.	JILA	1) Study on different types of library and information centre, 2) Library movement, 3) ICT and web2.0, 4) LIS Curriculum, 5) Research ethics, 6) Green library, 7) Preservation and conservation, 8) Publishing trends, and copyright issues.

Table 6 depicts the content of the periodicals as full-text or abstract form found from the associations' websites. Five journals as presented in table 6 are playing a crucial role for increasing knowledge domain in the field of LIS. The library associations have been publishing several articles in their journals from many years. The journals especially to be mentioned here are Library Herald, College Libraries (WBCLA), IASLIC Bulletin and JILA. The journals mainly seek to share the useful



innovations, both in thought and in practice, with the aim of encouraging scholarly exchange and the possible benefits that are borne of scrutiny, experimentation and debate. Articles present the different approaches, views and opinions that are taken by the scholars and researchers based traditional library activities like collection development and document processing to ICT application along with different management techniques. Thus, the progress in the field of LIS can be stressed from the scholarly publications.

Table 7: Book

Sl. No	Association (accessibility: P./E-bk)	No.	Themes
1	ALA (P.)	70	1)Library Profession, 2) Adult Education, 3) Agricultural Science
2	BLA (P.)	17(Bng.)+ 8(Eng.)=25	1)Library And Information Science and Other Allied Areas
3	IASLIC (P.& Dg.)	7 +2 =09	1) Documentation, 2) LIS profession, 3) National library, 4) Library management and services, 5) Indexing, 6) IASLIC, 7) Scientific communication.
4	PLA(P.)	03	1)Library and Information Science and other allied areas
5	KLA (P.& E-bk)	5 + 1=06	1)Library, 2)Librarianship, 3)Library Classification, 4)Library computerization in India
6	WBCLA (P.)	06	1)An overview to the perspectives on Library and Information Science, 2)Management: college libraries and librarians
7	SIS (E-bk)	01	1)Big data mining: the concepts, methods and applications

(Bng. = Bengali, Dg. = Digitised, E-bk= E-book, Eng. = English, P.=Print)

Like other publications, books also play a vital role in scholarly communication by exchanging information on a larger scale. Table 7 presents the information found from the website about the books that are published by the seven library associations. The numbers of books, their accessibility, mode of publication, and the main theme like the development of the library profession to big data have been covered.

Like the publications several webinars also provide virtual platform for scholarly communications. Many library associations have organised webinar on current LIS

related topics and given opportunity to clarify many queries directly with the renowned resource persons.

Table 8: Webinar

Sl. no.	Associations	Theme	Number
1	BLA	LIS and allied areas, library services in pandemic, miscellaneous	48
2	HLA	LIS and allied areas	02
3	MPLA	LIS and allied areas	14
4	PLA	LIS and allied areas	01
5	JILA	LIS and allied areas	02
6	ILA	LIS and allied areas	12
7	SLA	LIS and allied areas	17

Table 8 presents the list of associations that have organized webinars. The table shows the total number and the topic of the webinars collected from the websites. According to the table, various webinars on Library and Information Science and its related field have been organized by the associations. In this way, webinar tries to maintain the chain of continuous progress in the field of LIS.

7. Findings and discussion :

After analyzing the library associations' websites properly, it is observed that many websites are very well designed. They are publishing books, newsletters, journals, conference proceedings, etc. Through these publications, library associations are participating actively in scholarly communication. All the publications have a great impact on the LIS profession as well as professionals. They are maintaining the quality of their publications. The library associations have published books on different themes related to the library profession. The readers can get them offline, online, or both. Newsletters are being published monthly, half-yearly, quarterly, or even annually. Newsletters carry the image of the library associations as they present the details of their activities. The associations are publishing well-known peer-reviewed journals which are even in the UGC care list, i.e, College Libraries (WBCLA), Library Herald, IASLIC Bulletin, JILA. Researchers are benefitted from the full text or abstract of the well-known journals which are also available through websites. Li-



Library associations also bring out conference proceedings which are the collection of articles by renowned persons presented in different conferences or seminars. All these publications motivate, educate and enrich the students, professionals, and scholars. The learners and the educators are introduced to new trends and developments. They can think of new ideas based on the existing ones. Library associations are also organising webinars frequently on Library and Information Science and other allied fields during the pandemic. As the number of participants is unlimited in the webinar, many scholars, students, researchers can avail useful information globally. During the pandemic, webinars are being proved to be a very successful platform for scholarly communications. Many library associations such as Bengal Library Association, Hyderabad Library Association, Madhya Pradesh Library Association, Punjab Library Association, Indian Library Association, Indian School Library Association are coming forward to fill up the gap of dissemination of information through webinars.

8. Conclusion :

State and national level library associations are using the latest technology and making their websites suitable for scholarly communication through several publications. Library associations have been participating in scholarly communication from the very beginning of their establishment but mainly offline. The processes through which they share, access, disseminate, and discover knowledge is being changed deliberately in the 21st century. Governments around the world are taking an increasing interest in open access because they see instant benefits for professionals and society. Therefore, the importance of having own websites are felt necessary in the present era. Especially when we are stuck at home due to fatal contamination of COVID -19, online publication is the only way to maintain the progress of research work and to continue scholarly communication. So the library associations are using the blessing of WWW for the publications and making scholarly communication successful through their websites. The professional associations like ILA, IASLIC, Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists of India, IATLIS, WBCLA, etc. are trying continuously to publish revised articles, book, newsletter, journal, conference proceeding, organizing webinars on current LIS trends as per the demand to elevate the professionals, scholars, and researchers but still there is the scope of development.

9. Limitations and suggestions :

Library associations' publications discuss matters of professional interest, means of improving education, and the performance of the information services by the application of the latest available technology. But only half of the 27 websites are active on the web. Others have their websites but links are not working or under construction. Even the complete information regarding the publications is also not found. Websites are not upgraded regularly. Minimum information regarding the publication of books, newsletters, conference proceedings, and journals is seen on the websites. All the associations should upload their publications on the website and give full-text access to the same. So the scholars can be benefited much more than before. All the journals should be peer-reviewed and in the UGC care list to maintain the quality. The number of online publications should be increased overall. Webinars should be arranged from time to time to quench the thirst of the scholars and students and links to video recordings should be given on the websites. As the field of LIS is transforming from a traditional to a digital world, all the associations should come forward and make digital publication fruitful through their websites by the side of offline for disseminating knowledge and enriching scholarly communication.

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